

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9192
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
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AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

S E C R E T BEIRUT 4654

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, LE
SUBJECT: TENDENCIES WITHIN THE LEBANESE FRONT: COMMENTS
BY AMINE GEMAYEL

REF: (A) BEIRUT 4624, (B) BEIRUT 4536

1. FURTHER TO REF A, AMINE GEMAYEL TOLD EMBOFF ON
AUGUST 10 THAT THERE WERE NOW "TWO FACTIONS" WITHIN
THE LEBANESE FRONT:

-- THE FACTION WHICH ADVOCATED A MILITARY SOLUTION TO THE
SYRIAN PROBLEM. (AMINE IMPLIED VERY VLEARLY THAT THE
LEADER OF THIS FACTION WAS HIS BROTHER, BACHIR.)

-- THE FACTION WHICH ADVOCATED THE USE OF MILITARY MEANS
ONLY AS A LAST RESORT IN SUPPORT OF POLITICAL SITUATION.
AMINE SAID THAT IN ADDITION TO HIMSELF, DANY CHAMOUN AND
PIERRE GEMAYEL BELONGED TO THIS FACTION. AMINE ALSO CLAIMED
THAT DANY WAS MAKING GREAT EFFORTS TO BRING HIS FATHER,
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CAMILLE, INTO THE FOLD.

2. AMINE COMMENTED THAT HE HAD EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH
THE ISRAELIS. HE SAID HIS RELATIONS WITH THE SYRIANS WERE
"STRAINED," BUT THAT HE WAS DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN THEM
SO THAT DIPLOMACY RATHER THAN FIGHTING MIGHT RESOLVE THE
CURRENT CRISIS. AMINE ADDED THAT HE HAD MAINTAINED HIS

CONTACTS WITH THE FRANJIYAHs, AND THAT HE WAS THE ONLY MEMBER OF THE PHALANGE PARTY WHOM THEY DID NOT BLAME FOR TONY'S ASSASSINATION, WHICH AMINE CHARACTERIZED AS AN INCREDIBLY STUPID ACT.

3. COMMENT: AMINE IS VERY OBVIOUSLY TRYING TO PORTRAY HIMSELF AS A MAN OF PEACE, IN CONTRAST TO HIS BELLICOSE BROTHER BACHIR. AMINE MAY BE VERY SINCERE IN HIS DESIRE TO USE PEACEFUL MEANS TO DEAL WITH THE SYRIANS. AT THE SAME TIME, WE THINK HE IS USING THIS POSTURE, ALONG WITH THE PHALANGE EMERGENCY COMMITTEE (REF B), AS A WAY TO TRYING TO ESTABLISH PRE-EMINENCE OVER BACHIR, HIS PRINCIPAL RIVAL FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF THE PHALANGE PARTY AFTER PIERRE'S DEATH.

4. TO SOME EXTENT, THIS TACTIC SEEMS TO BE WORKING AMINE IS MUCH IN THE LIMELIGHT THESE DAYS, AND THE NEWSPAPERS HAVE RECORDED FAITHFULLY HIS VISITS TO BAABDA PALACE TO HELP ARRANGE A CEASE-FIRE. BACHIR, HOWEVER, HAS A LARGE AND DEDICATED FOLLOWING AS WELL AS CONTROL OF THE PHALANGE MILITARY APPARATUS, AND AMINE HAS A HARD ROW TO HOE.
PARKER

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